

a sensor for detecting if the portion of the protective tape on a wafer is properly removed by said cutting element;

a transport mechanism ^{not shown} for moving the wafer from support to a grinding apparatus ^{Not part of the invention} if the portion of the protective tape on the wafer is properly removed; and

a circuit for initiating corrective action to stop the transport mechanism from moving the wafer to the grinding apparatus when the sensor detects that the protective tape is not properly removed from a wafer by said cutting element.

7. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said first predetermined distance is approximately 0.5 mm from the edge of the wafer when the wafer is placed on said support.